

Modern libraries and the 'Blockbuster' Model

An Alternative and even better idea would be to cull the books and sort those which are out of copyright. They can then be digitized and placed into an archive such as:

Internet Archive:

<http://www.archive.org/search.php?query=amazing%20stories%20garthus%20AND%20collection%3Aopensource>

or Open Library:

<http://openlibrary.org/>

Internet Archive is for the actual digitized works, while Open Library contains the cataloging and meta-data for the books. Note the links from Open Library to Full-text versions of the books.

Unfortunately even well-intentioned donations to many libraries end up in the dumpster eventually because of space restrictions; especially here in the North Eastern part of the Country.

Once a book is digitized, not only is it protected from eventual loss due to deterioration (such as the PULPS which I digitized in the Link above); but it is available to a much broader part of the World's population.

Unfortunately, much of this discussion will center upon what one believes the mission of libraries should be. Should they be predominantly repositories for intellectual work in book-form? Or are digital works also part of the realm and duty of today's libraries; and, how much of the content should be digital or in other formats?

The movement of many libraries in the direction of being public service 'blockbusters' may pump up circulation on paper for local libraries. But the long-term implications will be disastrous for the local or community library since eventually on-line access to digital video media will end even the existence of 'blockbuster' Type commercial operations.

While culling through library discard tables and digging into dumpsters, I have found a good number of books that not only should have been digitized; but in some cases were worth over \$1,000 if one were to sell them to book collectors.

This book:

http://www.archive.org/details/Karma_A_Story_Of_Early_Buddhism

was found in a local library Dumpster. After digitizing it I had many offers requesting to purchase it for up to \$425. In any case this book had a very low publishing run and really belongs in an archive, but someone choose to discard it with out even checking to see what its worth was.

Digitization virtually guarantees the long-term preservation of our intellectual heritage; therefore this non-profit which you are talking about creating should also contain this component.

Gerry